

Jones, Stephanie

3146

From: Barbara O'Neill <barbaraoneill@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 03, 2016 9:19 PM
To: irrc@irrc.state.pa.us; ED, State Board of Ed
Subject: Proposed Changes to Immunization Requirements

Cindy Findley
Director, Division of Immunization
Department of Health
P.O. Box 90
Harrisburg, PA 17108

2016 MAY - 6 PM 3:01

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IRRC

Dear Ms. Findley:

I am deeply concerned over the proposal to change the immunization requirements for homeschoolers in the state. As a homeschooling parent, I should have the right to decide what is right for my child(ren). While I can appreciate that immunization is necessary in certain instances, there needs to be some flexibility with requirements.

Currently, homeschooling parents are not required to immunize their children until they are admitted to school (which includes attendance at a homeschool program). Under these "new" proposed changes, parents who choose to delay immunizations will not have enough flexibility in obtaining the required vaccines. Five days is far too short a provisional period. There may be danger in requiring too many vaccine doses in a short period of time. Parents should have more time (60 days or MORE) to develop a plan for their children to receive the required vaccines.

I am also concerned about the requirement that students would be required to receive an additional dose of a meningococcal vaccine before entering 12th grade. Once again, refer to the paragraph above. Also, the proposed change regarding the chicken pox vaccine. Chicken pox is not a life threatening illness, nor has there been any proven data that the vaccination helps ward off getting shingles in later years!! There are more cases of the flu than chicken pox on a yearly basis and I'm sure more people die from the flu. That being said, the proposed change to immunize for chicken pox is bogus, but regardless, it should be my right as a parent to vaccinate my children when and as I see fit.

At the end of the day, our children are not in a classroom of teachers and other students where we can "infect" others by being ill. We are with our children; homeschooling our children. We have enough common sense to not bring our "sickly" children around others. But, regardless of that, vaccinating my child should always be my choice and my choice should continue to be respected.

Sincerely,

Barbara O'Neill